

V E R S E S

TO THE MEMORY OF

ROBERT BURNS;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS INTERMENT AT DUMFRIES,

ON MONDAY THE 25th OF JULY, 1796:

ALSO,

HIS EPITAPH,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

" Sweetly deck'd with pearly dew

" The morning rose may blow;

" But cold successive noontide blasts

" May lay its beauties low."

BURNS.

Nae mair of his enchanting strains,

Shall sound through Caledonia's plains.

ANON.

GLASGOW:

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ACCOUNT OF THE
INTERMENT OF R. BURNS.

ACTUATED by the regard which is due to the shade of such a genius, his remains were interred on Monday the 25th July, 1796, with military honours and every suitable respect. The corpse having been previously conveyed to the Town-hall of Dumfries, remained there till the following ceremony took place. The military there, consisting of the Cinque Port Cavalry and the Angus-shire Pencibles, having handsomely tendered their services, lined the streets on both sides to the burial ground; the Royal Dumfries Volunteers, of which he was a member, in uniform, with crapes on their left arms, supported the bier; a party of that corps, appointed to perform the military obsequies, moving in slow solemn time to the Dead March in Saul, which was played by the military band, preceded in mournful array with arms reversed; the principal part of the inhabitants of that town and neighbourhood, with a number of the particular friends of the bard from remote parts, followed in procession; the great bells of the churches tolling at intervals. Arrived at the Church-yard Gate, the funeral party, according to the rules of that exercise, formed two lines, and leaned their heads on their firelocks pointed to the ground; through this space the corpse was carried; the party drew up along side of the grave, and after the interment fired three volleys over it. The whole ceremony presented a solemn, grand, and affecting spectacle and accorded with the general regret for the loss of a man, whose like we scarce can see again.

VERSES TO

BURNS' MEMORY.

I.
LET musing Melancholy drop a tear,
And gay fantastic Humour heave a sigh;
Let no unhallow'd hand approach the bier,
Where low in death his sacred reliques lie.

II.
BURNS, blest with native vigour struck the lyre:
Each heart assenting, felt the magic sound;
To soothe the soul the pleasing notes conspire;
From hill and dale the heavenly notes rebound.

III.
Alive to joy, while joy was on the wing;
To playful mirth, to humour void of art;
'Twas Nature's self that taught her hard to sing
The song of joy, pour'd genuine from the heart.

IV.
For Genius gone let Scotia melt in tears:
Her darling son no more shall soothe her woes,
No more gay hope excite,—dispel her fears,
Or tuneful sing her sorrows to repose.

V.
The soul of harmony, the plaintive strain
Fall sweetly pleasing on the ravish'd ear,
Nor let unmov'd the hardest heart remain:—
In silence drop the softly trickling tear.

VI.

See where the pledges sweet of mutual love
Are left in pinching penury to pine :
O ! if ye hope sweet mercy from above,
Let mercy sweet, to gen'rous deeds incline.

VII.

A widow's woes, a mother's tears revere,
And helpless babes, their father now no more :
The sight of these, alas ! belov'd and dear,
His dying breast with bitter anguish tore.

VIII.

His Jeanie's woes, his helpless babes forlorn,
The prospect dire of penury and want,
The insolent contempt, the haughty scorn,
The look disdainful, and the bitter taunt.

IX.

These, from th' unfeeling never cease to fall
With all their weight upon the wretched head ;
This well he knew : — the thought that heart ap-
pall'd
That smil'd in pain descending to the dead.

X.

O ! may his shade revisit oft with joy
These scenes which once to rapture rais'd his
mind : —
To glad his shade, your friendly aid employ,
To succour those he to your care consign'd.

XI.

When just about to bid this world adieu, —
His last advice still rings upon my ear,
“ These dying words, I now impart to you,
“ O ! might the world with due attention hear.

XII.

“ In sprightly youth of syren vice beware :
“ Learn from my fate the helpless lot of man ;
“ With caution learn to shun each gilded snare ;
“ O'erlook my faults, and all my beauties scan.”

E P I T A P H.

I.

Consign'd to earth, here rests the lifeless clay, and
Which once a vital spark from heav'n inspir'd. •
The lamp of genius shone full bright its day,
Then left the world to mourn its light retir'd.

While burns that splendid orb which lights the
spheres,

While mountain streams descend to swell the main,
While changeful seasons mark the rolling years,
Thy fame, O BURNS! let Scotia still retain.

I.

A Few fleeting years are now over and gone,
Since thou, pleasing Bard, first appear'd to our
view;

Enlighten'd by Genius, true Genius alone;
Delighted we saw thee thy progress pursue.

II.

We beheld in thy strains the solemn and the gay;
To Nature still true they came home to the heart;
Despising the weak finely polished lay,
Thou cast far behind the refinements of art.

III.

But ah! what avail'd it that Heaven did bestow
A mind so capacious all Nature to scan;
Shall I point out those frailties which humbled
thee low,
And levell'd thee down with the weakest of man.

IV.

No! Peace to thy shade—let thy frailties repose
In the cold, silent grave, where thine ashes are laid;

Those who love thee, thy faults will with pity
disclose,
And weep o'er the turf which now covers thy
head.

V.

Alas! sweetest Bard, shall the green turf we raise,
Be all the memorial to hand down thy name?
No other thou needest, thy strains are thy praise,
And these still shall render immortal thy fame.

Glasgow, July 26, 1796.

GENIUS of Scotia mourn!

Cypress bestrew the urn

Where BURNS lies dead;

No—Here the laurel gives

Her never fading leaves

To crown his head.

Scotia! tho' cold thy clime, tho' hard thy soil,
Where Nature fosters life by brawny toil—
Yet Genius lives—thy hills and rocks inspire
The Muses love, and force Poetic fire.

Weak glows that fire—the Muses droop—

Genius, unprop'd, begins to stoop—

Her Bard is gone.

In his plain breast that radiant light,

Deriv'd from Heav'n, with ardour bright,

Refulgent shone.

Sweet Bard, adieu! While Scotia bears a name;
Whilst Merit claims the laurel; Genius fame;
Thy name shall live—and tho' the world decays,
More vigorous still shall grow thy matchless praise.

EPITAPH
FOR
ROBERT BURNS,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I.
Is there a whim-inspired fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool,
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
And drap a tear.

II.
Is there a Bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
That weekly to this area throng,
O, pass not by!
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here, heave a sigh.

III.
Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,
Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and, through the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

IV.
The poor Inhabitant below
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame.
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name!

Reader, attend—whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,

In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious, *self-controul*,
Is Wisdom's root.

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

O THOU unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear!
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps, I must appear!

II.

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun;
As *something*, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done—

III.

THOU know'st that THOU hast formed me
With passions wild and strong;
And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

IV.

Where human Weakness has come short,
Or Frailty slept aside,
Do THOU, All Good ! for such THOU art,
In shades of darkness hide.

V.

Where with *intention* I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But, THOU art Good—and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

FINIS.